

## **4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS**

### **4.0 APPROACH TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS**

#### **4.0.1 SCOPE**

Sections 4.1 through 4.16 of this EIR present the environmental impact analysis for the anticipated effects of implementation of the Draft General Plan. Topics evaluated in these sections are described in Section 1.0, “Introduction”, and were identified in the notice of preparation (NOP) (Appendix A).

#### **4.0.2 STRUCTURE**

Each section in this chapter presents an evaluation of a particular environmental topic and includes a description of existing conditions (both physical and regulatory), potential environmental impacts, mitigation measures proposed to reduce significant environmental impacts (where necessary), and a determination of the level of significance after mitigation measures are implemented.

##### **REGULATORY SETTING**

This subsection describes federal, state, and regional and local plans, policies, regulations, and laws that apply to the environmental topic being evaluated with implementation of the Draft General Plan.

##### **ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING**

This subsection provides information about the existing physical environment related to the environmental topic. In accordance with Section 15125 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the discussion of the physical environment describes existing conditions within the planning area at the time the NOP was filed—June 28, 2010. The general plan update process included the collection of comprehensive data covering a variety of planning issues in 2006. Other documents (such as Urban Water Management Plans) which provide information on conditions in the planning area date to 2005. In some cases, these earlier data are the most detailed and comprehensive available, and provide environmental setting information used in the EIR. As a result of the economic recession that began in 2007, conditions existing in 2010 have not changed substantially since 2005 or 2006. It is the City’s judgment that these 2005 and 2006 data are representative of conditions on the ground at the time of the NOP in 2010.

##### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

This subsection provides an analysis of the potential environmental impacts of adoption and implementation of the Draft General Plan. First, where applicable, the subsection describes the methods, process, procedures, and/or assumptions used to formulate and conduct the impact analysis. Then, it will provide the text of Draft General Plan policies and programs which are discussed in impact discussions because of their potential to reduce one or more environmental impacts. Next, it presents the thresholds of significance used to identify the potential environmental impacts of the Draft General Plan. Following this is an analysis of the potential environmental impacts.

##### **RESIDUAL SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS**

This subsection describes the significance of the potential impact after incorporation of Draft General Plan policies and implementation programs, and proposed mitigation measures. Impacts are described as either less than significant or significant and unavoidable. Significant and unavoidable impacts are also summarized in Chapter 6, “Other CEQA Considerations.”

### 4.0.3 DETERMINING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

For each potential environmental impact identified in this EIR, a statement of the level of significance of the impact is provided. Impacts are assessed as one of the following categories:

- ▶ The term “no impact” is used when the environmental resource being discussed would or may not be adversely affected by implementation of the Draft General Plan. This impact level does not need mitigation.
- ▶ A “less-than-significant impact” would or may cause a minor, but acceptable adverse change in the physical environment. This impact level does not require mitigation, even if feasible, under CEQA.
- ▶ A “significant impact” would or may have a substantial adverse effect on the physical environment, but could be reduced to a less-than-significant level with mitigation. Impacts may also be considered “potentially significant” if the analysis cannot definitively conclude that an impact would occur with implementation of the Draft General Plan. Under CEQA, mitigation measures must be provided, where feasible, to reduce the magnitude of significant or potentially significant impacts.
- ▶ A “significant and unavoidable impact” would or may cause a substantial adverse effect on the environment, and no known feasible mitigation measures are available to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level. Under CEQA, a project with significant and unavoidable impacts could proceed, but the City would be required to prepare a statement of overriding considerations in accordance with Section 15093 of the State CEQA Guidelines, explaining why the City would proceed with the project despite potential for significant impacts.

### 4.0.4 FORMAT OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Throughout the discussion, impacts are identified numerically and sequentially. For example, impacts discussed in Section 4.1 are identified as 4.1-1, 4.1-2, and so on. Mitigation measures, where needed, are identified numerically to correspond with the number of the impact being reduced by the measure. For example, Mitigation Measure 4.1-1 would mitigate Impact 4.1-1.

The format used to present the evaluation of impacts and mitigation measures is as follows:

IMPACT 4.0-1	<i>Impact Title. An impact summary heading appears before the impact discussion. The heading contains the impact number and title. The impact statement briefly summarizes the findings of the impact discussion below. The level of significance is included at the end of the summary heading. Levels of significance listed in this EIR (as described above) are no impact, less than significant, potentially significant, or significant.</i>
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The impact discussion is contained in the paragraphs following the impact statement. The analysis compares implementation of the Draft General Plan to existing conditions by:

- ▶ identifying federal, state, regional, and local regulations that would reduce or mitigate the impact;
- ▶ identifying Draft General Plan policies, and implementation programs that would reduce or mitigate the impact; and,
- ▶ describing the potential impact with implementation of applicable regulations and Draft General Plan policies and implementation programs.

## Mitigation Measure

After the impact discussion, if necessary, feasible mitigation measures are identified that would reduce the impact. If no mitigation is necessary or feasible, this is stated.

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